




DIRECTIONS

From the intersection of Route 195 and Route 32, head south on Route 32 for .83 miles. Turn right onto Merrow Road and go for 0.1 miles. Parking area entrance is on the left.

Suggested Park Activities

-  Hiking
-  Picnicking
-  Fishing
-  Canoeing

Prohibited Park Activities

Unleashed Dogs
Mountain / Motor Biking
Camping / Camp Fires
Horseback Riding



**Mansfield
Parks &
Recreation**

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www.mansfieldct.org/parksandpreserves/
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Made possible through a grant from the
National Recreational Trails Program,
the Federal Highway Administration,
and the Connecticut Department
of Environmental Protection




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of Transportation
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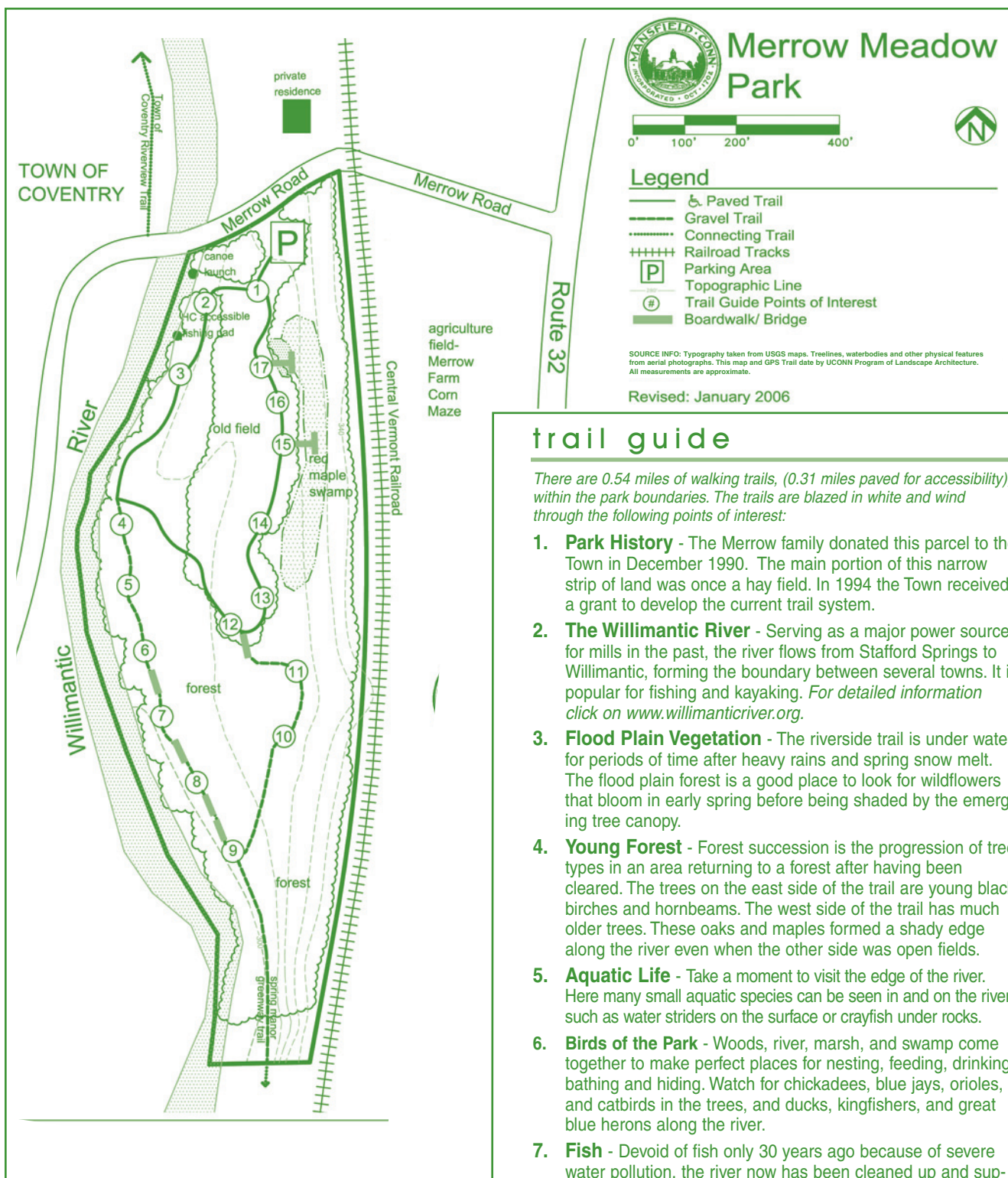
*For up-to-date trail information or to download maps
click on www.mansfieldct.org/trailguides/*

Merrow Meadow Park

Mansfield, CT

Merrow Meadow is a 33-acre park along the Willimantic River containing an old field, wetlands and wooded sections. Part of the Willimantic River Greenway, Merrow Meadow connects north to the Coventry Riverview Trail across the river and south to the Spring Manor Trail and Mansfield Depot.





ports up to 20 different species of game fish. Species include brown and rainbow trout stocked by the Ct. DEP and small-mouth bass.

- Shrub Swamp** - The alders growing here are shrubs and will never grow to be full sized trees. Although this area may not appear to be a swamp in late summer, the soil is waterlogged most of the time even when water is not visible on the surface.
- Upland Forest** - The forest you see on the hillside is very different from the flood plain forest along the river. Trees and shrubs that live in drier soils are found on this higher ground, such as pines and oaks.
- Changing Vegetation** - Possibly this was once a wet meadow; however, in recent years water-tolerant goldenrods have become the dominant vegetation. Now they are giving way to water-tolerant shrubs like dogwoods, winterberrys, and willows. The non-native invasive shrubs like multiflora rose and autumn olive are also present. These vegetation changes following disturbances are known as succession.
- Water Shapes the Landscape** - The movements of the glaciers and the streams and rivers formed by melting glaciers were major earthmovers of the past. Today, this stream continues the shaping process by eroding soils and carrying them away.
- Toad Wallow** - Small pools that dry up during most summers provide habitat for young amphibians. Wood frogs, American toads and spring peepers lay their eggs in the early spring when there is plenty of water. The young hatch and rapidly form lungs, develop legs and leave the water by early summer before the pools dry up. This dry period prevents fish from living here and eating tadpoles.
- Marsh** - The grass-like plants that live in this small marsh are able to grow in shallow water or water-saturated soils that would drown the root systems and kill most shrubs and trees. Full sunlight, fertile soil and abundant water make marsh wetlands the most productive wildlife habitats.
- Old Field Plants** - This grassy field was probably once forested. Early settlers cleared it for agriculture, and kept it free of trees and shrubs by cultivation, grazing or repeated mowing. Because the field is drier and less fertile than the surrounding wetlands, grasses and wild flowers dominate the vegetation.
- Red Maple Swamp** - A wetland dominated by trees or shrubs is called a swamp. These water-tolerant trees and shrubs include ash, elm, blueberry and winterberry.
- Old Field Habitat** - The grasses and wildflowers here support a very special group of animals. Caterpillars, which later will become butterflies, and grasshoppers can be seen on the leaves of the grasses. Birds, especially sparrows, make their nests on the ground in the tall grass. Smaller mammals like rabbits, voles, and mice live in tunnels under the dead grass.
- Seasonal Pools** - The sunny pools in the wetlands surrounding the old field are crucial to aquatic plants and animals that need warm shallow water, plentiful food, and protection from predators to survive.